

Morehead State University

Institutional Plan for Adult Learners

1. Financial Aid for Adult Learners

A. Current Financial Aid Programs for Adult Learners

Adult learners at Morehead State University are eligible for the following grants, loans and institutional scholarships.

- Federal Grants and Loans: Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant, Stafford Loan (William D. Ford Direct Loan), Perkins Loan, and Federal Student Employment Program
- State Grants: College Access Grant and Go Higher Grant
- Institutional Scholarships: Adult learners are eligible for and considered for all scholarship programs. The following scholarships are focused on the adult learner - Regional Campus Awards for adult learners attending one of the University's regional campuses; GED graduation participants from the MSU at West Liberty and Morehead Adult Learning Centers are awarded scholarship for a free three-hour class; students who participate in the College for a Day program at MSU at West Liberty receive a scholarship for a one hour class (MSU 101) and one participant in the College for a Day Program receives a scholarship for one three-hour class; The Frederick Endowment provides scholarships for students at MSU at West Liberty; the Non-traditional Student Scholarship Fund for adults; special scholarships through MSU Foundation for adults (Carolyn Flatt Scholarship for full-time adult students; Darrell & Leola Adams Scholarship for part-time adults; and Freda Kilburn Scholarship for a single parent in MSU Nursing program; the KCTCS Transfer Scholarship; Transfer Scholarship (for students with past hours from other universities); and funds from the General Scholarship Fund.
- Workforce, Employer Reimbursement Programs, and Veterans Administration Programs: The University also participates in programs for dislocated workers through Workforce Investment; STEPS program for low income married students or single parents who are eligible for the Kentucky Transitional Assistance Program; the Montgomery GI Bill and Post 9/11 GI Bill; and employer reimbursement programs.

The ALFI assessment found discrepancies in perceptions concerning the availability of financial aid and payment options between students and administrators and staff. Although information about financial aid is available, students reported that they were not satisfied with the information about sources

of financial aid that they were receiving. An issue may be that students do not know how to access the information. One of the needs identified by both students and administrators is the need for more aid for the part-time and working adult student. In order to understand the reasons for the differing perceptions and begin to move toward resolving them, CAEL recommended that the University solicit input from students, faculty and administrators, to address financial aid matters, articulate the reasons for each group's perceptions, and brainstorm about solutions.

B. Goals for Modifying, Expanding, or Increasing Financial Aid for Adult Learners

Goal 1: Increase scholarships for full- and part-time adult learners through the MSU Foundation.

Goal 2: Increase the amount of funds available for part-time adult learners.

Goal 3: Increase the awareness of the availability of financial aid for adults.

C. Plans to Achieve Goals

1. Goal 1: Increase scholarships for full- and part-time adult learners through the MSU Foundation.
 - a. In collaboration with Development Office develop a plan to expand the institutional scholarships for full- and part-time adults.
 - b. Submit plan for institutional review and implementation.
 - c. Designate funds for one three-hour class for Project Graduate students.
2. Goal 2: Increase the amount of funds available for part-time adult learners.
 - a. Implement fund raising activities at regional campuses through coordination with University Advancement to increase amount of funds available for full-time and part-time adult learners at regional campuses.
 - b. Identify part-time adults who are participating in Project Graduate and award a scholarship for one three-hour undergraduate class for their first semester.
 - c. Publicize the availability of these funds to adults at the regional campuses and Project Graduate students.
3. Goal 3: Increase the awareness of the availability of financial aid for adults.
 - a. Convene groups of students and administrators to discuss perceptions and identify strategies to increase awareness of available financial aid and billing options.
 - b. Create a virtual one-stop center for adult learners on the MSU website to promote the availability of financial assistance for adults.
 - c. Develop marketing pieces targeted to adult learners that list financial aid resources for adults.

- d. Send targeted information to prospective and current adult learners identified in institutional database.
- e. Sponsor “College for a Day” events for potential adult learners and include information and work sessions on financial assistance.
- f. Partner with the adult learning centers in the region to make them aware of financial aid for adults.
- g. Partner with the Commonwealth Educational Opportunity Center, the Workforce Investment districts, KCTCS, Veterans organizations, KHEAA, KnowHow2GoKentucky, and other community partners to make adult learners aware of financial aid and assist them to apply for financial aid.
- h. Partner with employers to increase employer reimbursement programs and develop flexible procedures.

2. Flexible Academic Programming

A. Current Flexible Academic Programming Options for Adult Learners

Morehead State University offers a variety of programs and delivery options for adult learners that provide flexibility. These options include:

- Online Programs and Courses – The University offers the following online degree options for students who have completed an associate degree or 60 semester hours: Bachelor of Business Administration with options in accounting, small business management and entrepreneurship, and general business; Bachelor of Science in Technology Management; Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN-BSN); and Bachelor of Science in Leadership in Medical Imaging.
- Bachelor of University Studies is an adult completer degree program that can be completed as a hybrid program that combines online and face-to-face classes or as an online program for students with an associate degree or 60 or more hours of lower division coursework.
- Regional Campuses and Sites – The University offers programs and courses in Ashland, Hazard, Jackson, Mt. Sterling, Prestonsburg, and West Liberty in the evenings and daytime for adult learners. The primary programs are elementary education, middle grades education, P – 5 education with an emphasis in special education, social work, Associate Degree in Nursing (Mt. Sterling) and University Studies. These programs are offered in a cohort delivery model.
- Weekend, Evening, and Accelerated Courses – At the regional campuses the courses are primarily evening classes that meet once a week. There are a limited number of weekend classes taught at the regional campuses as well as weekend classes that are compressed into 5 weeks to allow students to

concentrate on one class at a time and complete three classes over a fifteen week period of time.

The students identified the lack of sufficient course offerings each term as a barrier to their ability to complete their program. The ISAS revealed that the University used accelerated or modular approaches less than half of the time. Students may have extensive knowledge or skill in one concept that is being taught in a class. The student could not test out or demonstrate their knowledge. Instead they would be required to enroll in a three-hour course and repeat knowledge and skills that were proficient. The use of individualized or self-paced instructional formats at Morehead State University was much less than other institutions who participated in ISAS. The study found that there were few weekend and accelerated courses offered. If these formats were offered, they tended to be at the regional campuses.

B. Goals for Modifying, Expanding, or Increasing Flexible Academic Programming Options for Adult Learners.

Goal 1: Expand the number of evening, weekend, and accelerated classes in Morehead and at the regional campuses.

Goal 2: Redesign existing three credit hour courses into one-credit hour modules.

Goal 3: Expand the number of online programs and courses offered.

C. Plans to Achieve Goals

1. Goal 1: Expand the number of evening, weekend, and accelerated classes in Morehead and at the regional campuses.
 - a. Identify high demand adult degree programs and develop courses and rotations that combine evening, weekend, and online instruction for adults on the Morehead campus.
 - b. Identify high demand fields of study as part of the Bachelor of University Studies adult completer degree and develop courses and rotations that combine evening, weekend, and online instructional delivery for adults at the regional campuses.
 - c. Identify high demand fields of study as part of the Bachelor of University Studies adult completer degree and develop course rotations for adults enrolled exclusively online.
 - d. Market these degree options and programs online, through various media venues, and with employers.
2. Goal 2: Redesign existing three credit hour courses into one-credit hour modules.
 - a. Provide professional development opportunities through seminars, conferences, and the Center for Teaching and Learning for faculty to redesign courses into modular formats.

- b. Identify courses that can be designed into one credit hour modules.
 - c. Retain faculty to develop these one credit hour modules as a face-to-face and/or online course.
 - d. Offer and assess these courses.
3. Goal 3: Expand the number of online programs and courses offered.
- a. Identify high demand adult degree programs and develop courses and rotations for exclusively online delivery.
 - b. Market these degree options and programs online, through various media venues, and with employers.

3. Credit for Prior Learning

A. Current Credit for Prior Learning Policy and Data

Morehead State University currently accepts credit earned through the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), the military as recognized by the American Council on Education, and proficiency (challenge) exams for a small number of courses. Although not directly related to adult learners the University also accepts credit earned through the Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB) programs.

The table below lists the number of enrolled students and the number of credit hours earned for the past three semesters who received credit through CLEP or military experience.

Students Receiving CLEP or Military Credit

Term	Number of Students	Credit Hours Earned
Fall 2007	117	633
Spring 2008	107	616
Fall 2008	102	618

There was not a process at the University to assess prior learning through the use of portfolios or student demonstrations. Few departments utilize such resources as ACE's National Guide to College Credit for Workforce Training to award college credit for prior learning and/or certifications through professional organizations. There is not a comprehensive information resource center that assists students to identify prior learning experiences and how that learning may equate to college credits. The lack of such a resource and advising contributed to the students' request for assistance with life and career planning prior to or at the onset of enrollment.

B. Goals for Modifying, Expanding, or Increasing Credit for Prior Learning Options for Adult Learners

- Goal 1: Develop a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) system including portfolio assessment to recognize learning achieved through work and life experiences.
- Goal 2: Recognize credit earned through professional development that has been reviewed and approved by the American Council on Education.
- Goal 3: Establish an information clearinghouse of the methods by which an adult learner can earn credit.

C. Plans to Achieve Goals

1. Goal 1: Develop a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) system including portfolio assessment to recognize learning achieved through work and life experiences.
 - a. Establish a work group of faculty and staff to design a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) program to recommend for adoption.
 - b. Work group and other interested individuals will participate in and attend webinars, workshops, and conferences related to prior learning assessment sponsored by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) and similar organizations.
 - c. Utilize consultant services available through CAEL to develop the administrative policies and organizational structures for Prior Learning Assessment in accordance with the “Ten Standards for Assessing Learning.”
 - d. Submit a recommendation to academic departments, colleges, and University curriculum committees, and academic affairs administration to implement a Prior Learning Assessment Plan (PLA) that includes portfolio assessment.
 - e. Train faculty how to assess prior learning portfolios and provide feedback to students.
 - f. Develop orientation seminar or course to familiarize students with the process of developing a prior learning portfolio.
 - g. Implement and assess PLA.
2. Goal 2: Recognize credit earned through professional development that has been reviewed and approved by the American Council on Education.
 - a. Collaborate with academic departments, colleges, and University curriculum committees to develop a process to review and award appropriate credit for professional development and trainings that have been reviewed and approved by the American Council on Education.
 - b. Collaborate with academic departments, colleges, and University curriculum committees to develop a process to review and award appropriate credit for other certifications and trainings.
 - c. Collaborate with the Registrar to develop a system to transcript the credit awarded through this process.

3. Goal 3: Establish an information clearinghouse of the methods by which an adult learner can earn credit.
 - a. Establish an online information clearinghouse to store information on the resources (CLEP, ACE, challenge exams, portfolios, etc.) available to adults to earn credit for prior learning.
 - b. Orient faculty and staff to the resources and strategies to advise adult learners about their options regarding credit for prior learning.

4. Campus Climate

A. Current Campus Climate Related to adult learners.

Both faculty and staff identified the need for greater awareness of the adult learner and strategies to address the needs of adult learners. The ALFI assessment indicated that faculty and staff would benefit from identifying, exploring, and trying new approaches to the teaching and learning process. The ALFI assessment also noted that perceptions of the University's performance on the Principles of the Teaching/Learning Process and Assessment yielded a rank higher among adult learners than among faculty and administrators. Although students appear satisfied with the way the University is meeting their needs regarding teaching and learning, CAEL recommended that the institution make faculty development a third priority for the University's plan. From the ISAS, faculty and administrators indicate that they believe Morehead State can significantly improve its performance in these areas. Unlike the students, who have limited knowledge of possible teaching and learning processes and assessment techniques, faculty and administrators are familiar with a wide range of possibilities and innovative ideas. Opportunities for faculty and administrators to identify, explore, and try out new approaches to teaching and learning and assessment of student learning outcomes will improve the campus climate related to adult learners.

There was a difference in perception between University representatives and students on the issue of the availability of assistance with life and career planning and student support services. The University representatives rated the institution in the middle while the students rated their level of satisfaction with student support services and life and career planning issues as last. The institution perceived that individual assistance was available to help students solve unique problems, cope with stress of managing life, work, and college pressures while students did not perceive this assistance was available or they were dissatisfied. The students identified such issues as having a single point of contact for services or assistance, ability to talk with advisors about issues related to the stress of managing academics, work, life and other personal responsibilities, or having

institutional staff and support available at convenient times and locations. The institutional representatives also identified these issues as areas that need to be explored. Because planning for life and career is often a motivating factor for adults returning to school, the University would do well to focus on addressing adult learners' life and career goals before or at the onset of enrollment. After enrollment student support services tailored toward adult learners would increase the likelihood of successful completion. Consequently, CAEL recommended that attention to life and career planning before or at the onset of enrollment and student support services should be a priority for the University.

B. Goals for Changing Campus Climate to Better Meet the Needs of Adult Learners

- Goal 1: Increase faculty and staff understanding and skills related to adult learning, advising adults, prior learning assessment, and teaching adults.
- Goal 2: Increase the availability and awareness of student support services for adult learners.
- Goal 3: Increase life and career planning activities for adult learners.

C. Plans to Achieve Goals

1. Goal 1: Increase faculty and staff understanding and skills related to adult learning, advising adults, prior learning assessment, and teaching adults.
 - a. Offer workshops on adult learning, advising adults, prior learning assessment, course redesign, and teaching adults through the Center for Teaching and Learning.
 - b. Offer workshops for faculty and staff through the Adult Education Academy.
 - c. Participate in webinars, online courses and professional development conferences sponsored by CAEL and other organizations related to prior learning assessment and adult learning.
 - d. Assist faculty through the Center for Teaching and Learning to use the knowledge and skills to redesign courses and implement teaching strategies.
2. Goal 2: Increase the availability and awareness of student support services for adult learners.
 - a. Establish a one-stop virtual resource center for adult learners that links the learners to online assistance and face-to-face assistance on each campus.
 - b. Identify persons on each campus and online to serve as advocates for adult learners to offer assistance in coping with home, work, and school.
 - c. Provide professional development activities for student services staff to train them in advising and working with adult students.
 - d. Embed a student services link in all Blackboard course shells for online learners.

- e. Extend hours of key offices so adult learners can contact student support offices outside of the 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. time frame.
 - f. Utilize and promote MSU “Live Help” and chat among adult learners.
 - g. Schedule regular visits by student services offices and program advisors to the regional campuses.
 - h. Designate times that students can use the interactive television or webcams to interact with student services and program advisors.
 - i. Establish an online social network for MSU adult learners to interact with other MSU adults learners.
3. Goal 3: Increase life and career planning activities for adult learners.
- a. Provide professional development in career planning through the Office of Career Services for staff and advisors who are primarily working with adult learners.
 - b. Design an orientation process for adult learners that faculty and staff can use to assist adult learners to develop an educational plan based on their work, life, and educational experiences.
 - c. Provide professional development for faculty and staff in academic advising with adult learners.
 - d. Establish an online information clearinghouse to store information on the resources (CLEP, ACE, challenge exams, portfolios, etc...) available to adults to earn credit for prior learning.
 - e. Partner with the local Adult Learning Centers in the service region to assist adult learners acquire the academic skills necessary to be successful in college.

5. Other Issues Related to Adult Learners

A. Other Opportunities or Needs Identified through the ALFI Toolkit

CAEL recommended that the University capitalize on its strength in delivering information through technology and use this strength in technology in marketing campaigns. In addition, students, administrators, faculty and staff agreed that the institution’s performance on helping students to transition from the University to careers or other educational endeavors was above average. Here, too, CAEL recommended that marketing materials include reference to the university’s support of guided pathways that lead from the institution’s programs and services in order to ensure that students’ learning will apply usefully to achieving their educational and career goals.

B. Goals for Addressing Opportunities or Needs

Goal 1: Develop marketing and recruitment plans and materials tailored to the adult learner which capitalizes on the University’s ability to help adults realize career and educational goals.

Goal 2: Develop marketing and recruiting approaches that capitalize on the University's strength of using technology to deliver information.

C. Plans to Achieve Goals

1. Goal 1: Develop marketing and recruitment plans and materials tailored to the adult learner which capitalizes on the University's ability to help adults realize career and educational goals.
 - a. Develop a marketing plan for adult learners.
 - b. Develop print and electronic materials targeted toward adult learners.
2. Goal 2: Develop marketing and recruiting approaches that capitalize on the University's strength of using technology to deliver information.
 - a. Develop a website targeted toward adult learners using resources such as Project Graduate, KnowHow2GoKY, etc...
 - b. Utilize and promote MSU "Live Help" and chat among adult learners.
 - c. Recruit adult learners with 90 or more hours of college credit through Project Graduate to recruit.
 - d. Recruit KCTCS graduates and students with 30 or more KCTCS credit hours.
 - e. Develop relationships with local employers to jointly design programs to meet their needs and to recruit employees through onsite visits.
 - f. Cultivate relationships with Adult Learning Center directors in the region.
 - g. Collaborate with Adult Learning Centers in the service region to recruit GED graduates and other adults.